

**Curtis Harper Flanagan**  
With input from his daughter

Curtis Harper Flanagan, son of Arch J. Flanagan, Sr. and Martha Elizabeth Smith (Cousin Jay and Lizzie) was born April 10, 1907 and died April 2, 1988, both in Farmville, Pitt County, NC. He married Clara Belle Modlin on June 17, 1934 in Farmville. Curtis and Clara had a daughter, Clara.

Curtis grew up on a farm in the Farmville community. He attended a preliminary school at Lang's Crossroads then in Farmville when the family moved to town. He started to school at 5 years old and surprised his family and teacher by not tiring of school. He was interested in team and outdoor sports and was active in sports at Wake Forest. He played on the basketball team in college and enjoyed baseball and outdoor sports including hunting and fishing. He was on the championship basketball team that won the Southern Conference (later the A.C.C.) He especially liked bird hunting for quail. He went to Wake Forest College studying premed as his brother had done. Having started to school at such an early age, he turned 18 in 1925 and graduated the following June. After college he worked on the farm and later went to New York City where he was a dispatcher for a large cab company. This was during the depression and was a conscious family decision after a year in which he and his brother netted a total of \$15 for a whole year's work on the farm.

Following his sojourn to the north, he returned home to manage his farmland, marry and raise his daughter. He worked at various outside jobs; on the tobacco market, for Armour, a fertilizer firm and in the fire service. Curtis was always interested in the fire service and was fire chief in Farmville for many years. This interest led him into one of the more meaningful positions he had during his life, which was that of Executive Secretary for the North Carolina State Firemen's Association. This position, which he accepted in 1955, had the responsibility for training in the state and for firemen's benefits. He worked to get a state program in place for the Firemen's Insurance and Pensions Fund and to establish the Rescue Squad of NC. During WW II he was called on to help develop fire-fighting capability on ships and military bases. He was also a member of the Rotary Club. He was active in the First Christian Church of Farmville where he served in several capacities. Over the years he received many awards and accolades for his efforts in fire work and other community endeavors including Fireman of the Year in North Carolina.

Curtis was a progressive farmer for his day and brought an enlightened approach to farming. Like so many of the area's farmers, he realized that the economy was dependent on how well the year's crop grew and the market forces that helped determine prices. Tobacco is an intense money crop and constant attention is and was necessary to harvest it and to protect its viability as a commodity. He was among the first in Pitt County to install bulk curing barns which became a trend in the community in doing so. Weathering the depression when tobacco sold for very little was no easy feat. Curtis and his brother did that well enough that they were able to add to their property as the depression ended.